



NARA COVID-19 Response

Fact Sheet #1, version 5: Leave and workforce flexibilities for COVID-19 response

June 9, 2021

This fact sheet provides guidance to help protect NARA staff and reduce the spread of the 2019 novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in the workplace. This version has been updated to remove references to FFCRA emergency paid sick leave, which expired December 31, 2020, and to include ARP Emergency Paid Leave.

Leave and telework flexibilities.

An employee should *always* use sick or other (paid or unpaid) leave if they are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19.

A supervisor may approve sick leave for a period longer than three days without a doctor's note or medical documentation (ordinarily required by [NARA 327, Supplement 3](#), para.14) if the supervisor determines that obtaining the documentation would be too burdensome on the employee.

A supervisor may approve up to five days per week of telework for an employee, provided that there is sufficient telework-appropriate work available. This applies to all staff, including employees occupying positions that are not otherwise telework eligible. Supervisors are encouraged to be flexible and creative in identifying telework-appropriate work. Supervisors are not expected or required to authorize five-day-per-week telework if there is not sufficient telework-appropriate work available, except for employees in higher-risk groups and special populations. All employees who telework during the current public health emergency must complete the COVID-19 telework agreement form [here](#).

All employees are expected to be available for appropriate work when on weather and safety leave. An employee on weather and safety leave may be directed to contact her or his supervisor, attend meetings, or perform work that is consistent with her or his work status and (if applicable) reasonable accommodation, with appropriate advance notice. An employee who is not available as required may be charged leave for any periods they are not available.

The following table provides guidance on the appropriate leave category or telework options available, based on an employee's request for absence. If more than one of the scenarios listed below applies to an employee, the employee should work with her or his supervisor to determine the best leave and telework solution, based on the employee's personal circumstances and NARA's needs, from what is available for each applicable scenario below. This table consolidates flexibilities provided in [NARA 327, Supplement 3](#), Leave and Absence, [NARA 332](#), Telework Program, OMB M-20-13, Updated Guidance on Telework

Flexibilities in Response to Coronavirus, and the American Rescue Plan (ARP).

| Reason for the employee's request: | Appropriate leave status: |
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| <p>Employee: (1) is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19; or (2) has been diagnosed with COVID-19.</p> | <p>The employee will be placed on home isolation for at least 10 calendar days. An employee who experiences symptoms before or after being placed on home isolation must wait at least 24 hours since their fever has resolved without the use of fever-reducing medication and 10 calendar days after they first experienced symptoms and after any other symptoms have improved before returning to work. If, at the end of the initial 10 calendar day isolation period, the employee has not completed the 24-hour and 10-calendar-day periods without symptoms, their home isolation will be extended.</p> <p>If the employee experiences symptoms at any time on home isolation or quarantine, they must take sick leave, ARP emergency paid leave, annual leave, Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave, leave without pay (LWOP), donated leave under the Voluntary Leave Transfer Program (VLTP), or other paid time off, such as compensatory time off and credit hours.</p> <p>If the employee is not experiencing symptoms while on home isolation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) The employee may telework up to five days per week, provided that the employee signs a COVID-19 telework agreement and sufficient telework-appropriate work is available. (b) If the employee chooses not to telework during the isolation or quarantine period, sick leave, annual leave, FMLA leave, LWOP, donated leave under the VLTP, and other paid time off, such as compensatory time off and credit hours, should be used to cover the absence. (c) If no telework-appropriate work is available or the employee is not able to telework, they are entitled to weather and safety leave. |

| Reason for the employee's request: | Appropriate leave status: |
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| <p>Employee has been in close contact (within 6 feet for longer than 15 minutes) with someone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19.</p> | <p>An employee who is fully vaccinated will not be required to take any special precautions, if they are not experiencing symptoms. Fully vaccinated means it has been at least two weeks since the individual's second dose of a two-dose COVID-19 vaccine series, or two weeks since receiving a single-dose vaccine.</p> <p>An employee who is not fully vaccinated will be quarantined for at least 14 calendar days. An employee who experiences symptoms after being placed on quarantine must follow the procedures for home isolation, above.</p> <p>If the employee is not experiencing symptoms while on quarantine:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) The employee may telework up to five days per week, provided that the employee signs a COVID-19 telework agreement and sufficient telework-appropriate work is available. (b) If the employee chooses not to telework during the quarantine period, the employee should cover the absence using sick leave, annual leave, FMLA leave, LWOP, donated leave under the VLTP, and other paid time off, such as compensatory time off and credit hours. (c) If no telework-appropriate work is available or the employee is not able to telework, they are entitled to weather and safety leave. |
| <p>Employee is: (1) in a population identified by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as being at a higher risk for serious complications or special populations; and (2) has a reasonable accommodation for her or his condition.</p> | <p>The employee may telework up to five days per week.</p> <p>If no telework-appropriate work is available or the employee is not able to telework, they are entitled to weather and safety leave.</p> <p>If the employee has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to concerns about COVID-19 and is unable to telework, the employee may use annual leave, LWOP, ARP emergency paid leave, and other paid time off, such as compensatory time off and credit hours, to cover the absence.</p> |

| Reason for the employee's request: | Appropriate leave status: |
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| Employee requires time off to obtain a COVID-19 vaccine or to recover from an injury, disability, illness, or condition related to the COVID-19 vaccine. | <p>Employees are permitted to use the four hours of administrative leave granted every pay period by the Archivist of the United States to obtain COVID-19 vaccines.</p> <p>Otherwise, sick leave, ARP emergency paid leave, annual leave, FMLA leave, LWOP, donated leave under VLTP, and other paid time off, such as comp time and credit hours, must be used for any time that the employee unable to work in order to obtain or recover from a COVID-19 vaccine.</p> |
| Employee asks for leave to prevent possible exposure but has not been diagnosed with COVID-19, is not experiencing symptoms, and has not been in close contact (within 6 feet for longer than 15 minutes) with someone diagnosed with COVID-19. | <p>The employee's supervisor may approve up to five days per week of telework, provided that sufficient telework-appropriate work is available.</p> <p>Annual leave, LWOP, and other paid time off, such as comp time and credit hours, must be used to cover any absence.</p> |
| Employee must care for a family member who: (1) has been diagnosed with COVID-19; or (2) is experiencing symptoms but has not been diagnosed with COVID-19. | <p>The employee's supervisor may approve up to five days per week of telework, provided that sufficient telework-appropriate work is available.</p> <p>Sick leave, ARP emergency paid leave, annual leave, FMLA leave, LWOP, donated leave under VLTP, and other paid time off, such as comp time and credit hours, must be used for any time the employee is unable to work to care for the family member.</p> <p>Full-time employees are entitled to use up to 104 hours (13 work days) per year of sick leave to provide general medical care for a family member.</p> |

| Reason for the employee's request: | Appropriate leave status: |
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| Employee must care for children during a school (or day care) closing, but the employee and children are not experiencing symptoms and have not been diagnosed with COVID-19. | <p>The employee's supervisor may approve up to five days per week of telework, provided that sufficient telework-appropriate work is available.</p> <p>ARP emergency paid leave, annual leave, LWOP, and other paid time off, such as comp time and credit hours, must be used for any time the employee is unable to work to provide child care.</p> |
| Employee must care for a family member (including a child), if the place of care is closed or the direct care provider is unavailable due to COVID-19. | <p>The employee's supervisor may approve up to five days per week of telework, provided that sufficient telework-appropriate work is available.</p> <p>Annual leave, LWOP, and other paid time off, such as comp time and credit hours, must be used for any time the employee is unable to work to provide care. ARP emergency paid leave may be used for periods when the employee is unable to work, if the family member has a mental or physical disability or is 55 years of age or older and incapable of self care.</p> |
| Employee's regular work facility is closed. | <p>If the employee is in a telework eligible position: The employee will be required to telework up to five days per week (depending on the employee's regular work schedule) during the facility closure or must take leave.</p> <p>If the employee's position is ordinarily not telework eligible: If telework-appropriate work can be assigned, the employee may telework up to five days per week during the facility closure, provided the employee signs a COVID-19 telework agreement and sufficient telework-appropriate work is available. If no telework-appropriate work is available or the employee is not able to telework, they are entitled to weather and safety leave.</p> |
| Employee is subject to an isolation order or quarantine by a Federal, State, or local government public health agency, including when a public health agency recommends or requests that | <p>The employee's supervisor may approve up to five days per week of telework, provided that the employee signs a COVID-19 telework agreement and sufficient telework-appropriate work is available.</p> <p>If the employee chooses not to telework during the isolation or quarantine period, sick leave, ARP emergency paid leave</p> |

| Reason for the employee's request: | Appropriate leave status: |
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| the employee self-quarantine. | <p>annual leave, FMLA leave, LWOP, donated leave under the VLTP, and other paid time off, such as compensatory time off and credit hours, should be used to cover the absence.</p> <p>If no telework-appropriate work is available or the employee is not able to telework, they are entitled to weather and safety leave.</p> |
| Employee is unable to come to work because transportation is disrupted (but the facility remains open). | <p>The employee's supervisor may approve up to five days per week of telework, provided that sufficient telework-appropriate work is available.</p> <p>If no telework-appropriate work is available or the employee is not able to telework, annual leave, comp time, credit time, travel comp, or LWOP must be used to cover the absence.</p> <p>Depending on the circumstances, particularly if there is little or no advance notice, the supervisor may allow a limited amount of weather and safety leave for the first day of the disruption or closure.</p> |
| Employee requests leave for any of the above reasons but has no accrued annual or sick leave. | <p>Annual leave may be advanced up to the amount the employee will accrue in the remainder of the leave year. Please see NARA 327, Supplement 3, para. 10 for more details.</p> <p>Sick leave may be advanced in cases of serious disability or ailment, not to exceed 30 days. Please see NARA 327, Supplement 3, para. 16 for personal medical needs and para. 21 for family care.</p> <p>ARP emergency paid leave is available in addition to regular sick and annual leave. Employees are entitled to up to 600 hours of ARP emergency paid leave for specific, qualifying reasons, for leave taken between March 11 and September 30, 2021. Please see NARA Notice 2021-150 for additional information.</p> |

For a definition and more information on Leave Without Pay (LWOP), please see [NARA 327, Supplement 3](#), para. 27. For Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) information, please see [NARA 327, Supplement 5](#), *Family and Medical Leave*. For NARA's Voluntary Leave Transfer Program (VLTP), please see [NARA 327, Supplement 6](#), *Voluntary Leave Transfer Program*. For more information on ARP emergency paid leave, please see [NARA Notice](#)

Core Hours

During the COVID-19 public health emergency, employees who telework may schedule start and end times at any time between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. local time, according to their work schedules. An employee may request a change in start and end times with 24 hours' notice. Any change is subject to supervisory approval. Changes in employee work hours are not recorded in NARA human resources systems, and supervisors who approve a change in an employee's work hours do not need to submit any forms to implement a change.

Flexible Work Schedules

During the COVID-19 public health emergency, supervisors may approve a General Schedule (GS) employee's request to temporarily change to a maxiflex work schedule, regardless of the employee's GS-grade. Employees on a maxiflex work schedule may vary their start and end times, work more than eight hours per day, and complete the 80 hour per pay period (for full-time employees) work requirement in fewer than 10 days. Maxiflex employees may only earn credit hours or compensatory time after completing their entire work requirement for the pay period (80 hours for full-time employees), and with advance supervisory approval. Maxiflex employees are not entitled to night differential, holiday pay, or overtime "suffered or permitted," and will only be credited for eight hours (for full-time employees) on a Federal holiday.

The following changes in policy are effective during the COVID-19 public health emergency and, during the pandemic, will supersede any conflicting provisions in NARA 327, Supplement 2, Work Hours and Premium Pay:

- Employees may request a temporary change to a maxiflex work schedule immediately and without regard to the requirement that requests ordinarily must be submitted on the quarter. Until further notice, changes may be requested at any time but must be made effective at the start of the following pay period.
- Employees who are approved for maxiflex under this authority may telework at any time, 12:00 AM through 11:59 PM, Monday through Saturday. Maxiflex employees are not authorized to work or earn credit hours on Sundays.
- Beginning September 13, 2020, and for the duration of the public health emergency, maxiflex employees may earn more than two hours of credit hours per day, but may not carry over more than 24 credit hours (for a full-time employee) into the next pay period. A part-time employee may carry over up to 25 percent of her or his total hours worked each pay period. Any credit hours above the pay period limit will be forfeited at the end of the pay period and the employee is not entitled to any compensation for those hours.

Employees in GS-grades 14 and below who are approved for a temporary maxiflex work schedule will have their maxiflex work schedules cancelled and will return to their previous work schedules once the COVID-19 public health emergency is over.

Supervisors may approve employee requests for maxiflex at their discretion. Supervisors who approve an employee's maxiflex request to make a temporary change in work schedule must submit a completed NA Form 3096, Alternative Work Schedule Employee Selection Form, reflecting the new work schedule, to the Department of Treasury, Administrative Resource Center (ARC), at NARAHR@fiscal.treasury.gov. ARC will record the new work schedule in FPPS, and the employee's timekeeper will record the change in Quicktime.

Change to part-time schedule

During the COVID-19 public health emergency, employees may request to temporarily change from a full-time to a part-time work schedule immediately and without regard to the requirement that requests ordinarily must be submitted on the quarter. If approved, work schedule changes will be made effective at the start of the pay period following the date of the approval. Employees who move to a part-time work schedule under this authority may return to a full-time work schedule at the end of the COVID-19 public health emergency (or earlier), upon request.

Supervisors who receive an employee's request to make a temporary change to a part-time work schedule must first contact the Department of Treasury, Administrative Resource Center (ARC), at NARAHR@fiscal.treasury.gov. ARC will counsel the employee on the impact a change in basic work requirements will have on her or his retirement and other benefits. A supervisor who approves a change must submit a "Change in Work Schedule" action in FPPS.

Point of Contact: If you have questions or comments, please contact the Office of Human Capital at employeerelations@nara.gov.